

TOWN OF WASHINGTON

Washington Economic Development Committee

Minutes-Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 3:00 PM

Minutes are subject to approval of the Economic Development Committee

Member Present: Fran Keilty, Trisha McMahon, Lisa Stein, Dan Sherr, Robyn Gray,

Public: Liz Fenton, Chris Charles, Joan Lodsini

Staff: Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

1. **Call to order:** Michelle Gorra called the meeting to order at 3:05
2. Without a quorum, the minutes were not voted on.
3. **Report on activities of Economic and Community Development Coordinator**
 - a. **Selectmen's Appointments-** Dan Sherr, Tony Bedini, Jim Brinton, Michael Jackson, Wayne Hileman, Lisa Stein, Fran Keilty, Robyn Gray, Kristen Atlas, Trisha McMahon and Rudy Montgelas were all reappointed to the WEDC for indefinite terms at the Board of Selectmen's meeting Feb. 2, 2023
 - b. **New Home Owner's Mailings-** The January letters have not yet gone out. There was an issue with the reports from the Assessor. This should be resolved shortly.
 - c. **Welcome Center-** The Maps have been printed but the mounting adhesive has not arrived yet. The rest of the historic images will be printed shortly now that all permissions have been received. The installation should hopefully start soon.
 - d. **Arts Council-** The first Arts Council meeting was held Feb 9th after the Selectmen appointed 9 members. Now has a page on the town of Washington website, the minutes and agendas will be posted there.
 - e. **Photo Contest-** Is still open and sent the info to Shepaug, Rumsey and the Fredrick Gunn school. Closes March 15th. hoping we get one more good snow so the photographers can get a good Winter photo.
 - f. **WBA workshop-** 20 people in attendance, it was offered hybrid. Julie Nable of SandorMax presented, and Jim Brinton came for a Q & A. A couple of things that were brought up – Talk about the municipal parking lot and signage for it, and better signage for the depot. Would like to make people more aware of where businesses are.
 - g. **Litchfield Magazine's Readers Choice Awards-** We put a notice in the selectmen's email and adding a congratulations to the town newsletter, there were 79 awards to Washington Businesses'! More than any other city or town. (Michelle's Unofficial count.)
 - h. **Affordable Housing-** Still in the forefront in a lot of conversation, organizations recognize the need.
 - i. **New business-** Regional Hospice, above the Hickory Stick will be offering counseling, support groups etc. Will be putting an announcement in the selectmen's email blast. Inari- new Asian Bistro also in the Depot, will put together an announcement for that as well. Talk about thinking of a name for that plaza so people have a better idea where things are.
4. **Old Business**

- a. **Next year's budget request-** (will attach copy of budget to the minutes)
- Key points; We'll leave some money for printing for communication that might be needed. trying to get the Titus plan funded through grants. Cost of printing and postage has increased for the quarterly newsletter.
 - Sustainability CT, work with NOW sub-group on attracting young families, continue to work with WBA, conduct a survey/ review to outline improvised pedestrian and parking options for the villages.
 - Support/advance town and regional arts culture organizations and events for 2023-24. Total budget request; \$60,000
5. **Report of WBA and Selectmen on items not on the agenda. -**
Fran talked about Breakfast and Business meeting at 8am at the pantry, and was very well attended. Talking about PR and press releases, this event will be held the 3rd Monday of every month, a great networking event. Kudus to the WBA for organizing this event
- The Booth Property- it's been several months since Michelle has talked to Lauren about the property, she will touch base with her again regarding. Still on the market but haven't heard if there are any inquiries. On the market for 1.5 million
 - Talk of Wykeham Rise was brought up- we aren't in any new position the court cases have been decided the special permit comes with conditions. It's moving forward very slowly; the neighbors are continuing to write letters. There's nothing really that can be changed, everything has been decided by the courts. The minutes are on the zoning website for whoever wants to read more about it.
 - Litchfield Bankcorp, the space is now for rent as office space or retail space. The space is going to be difficult to be used as a restaurant because of the septic being shared with other businesses. Russ Barton bought it for \$200,000.
6. Visitors- none
7. Adjournment- Motion to adjourn at 4:05 made by Dan Sherr, seconded by Trisha all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda Reale
Selectman's Assistant

Recording <https://youtu.be/jHVMcp6vaF8>